

Working to create safe, attractive and healthy neighborhoods throughout Central OklahomaSM

A bimonthly publication of The Neighborhood Alliance, Inc.
1236 NW 36th Street • Oklahoma City, OK 73118-5604
Phone: (405) 528-6322 • Fax: (405) 521-0798 • www.nacok.org

Making Plans

A few years ago I set out to remodel the kitchen in our 75-year-old home. For a year or more I pored over magazines, online articles, talked to my neighbors, visited showrooms, attended several neighborhood home tours... all in an effort to get ideas. I didn't want the "same ole same ole." I wanted an innovative plan that made my kitchen highly functional, a design that made me fall in love with my house all over again and most importantly a concept that made sure the new kitchen fit in appropriately with the old house.

The planning phase of any project will absolutely make or break the outcome. Can you imagine what your kitchen remodel would look like if you told all the contractors to "come on in and do what you want, I trust you." We would never dream of that!

We cannot have that same lackadaisical attitude when it comes to planning for our City's growth. planOKC is the City of Oklahoma's way of planning for that remodeling project. This plan will give

us an idea of what we all want from our city in the next 20 years and this time, they really want the plan to focus on neighborhoods; the places where we all live and play.

Do we want the "same ole same ole?" Do we want to just throw open the doors and tell developers to come on in and do your best, we trust you! Or do we want to put our heads together and come up with some ideas that will make us fall in love with our neighborhoods all over again?

The planOKC process will listen to you!

It is time for us to start thinking about our city in a new light. You can start by researching other city's plans online, talk to your friends and relatives in other major cities and see what they have done, bring ideas that you have seen on your travels, or even just ideas that you have thought about but never had any place to voice.

The planOKC process will listen to you! All ideas are welcome, but remember, this is about *planning*. When you are

remodeling a kitchen, you don't research recipes. The recipes come about after the remodeling phase. In planOKC we don't talk about how to get our pot holes filled, or our medians mowed, instead we talk about new and innovative ideas, road and landscape designs that reduce the amount of maintenance required and how we want the City to look and function in the future.

Make it a point to be involved. Come to the meetings. Answer the online surveys. Let your opinions be heard. We have all helped build a beautiful and welcoming downtown and now let's think about our neighborhoods. This is where we, the neighborhood leaders, are the experts.

We would like to see all of you on July 15 for the kickoff of this *very exciting* phase in our City's story. Consider yourself personally invited. I cannot wait to see the "kitchen" that we all come up with!



Georgie Rasco
Executive Director

Can you contribute to OKC's long range plan?

planOKC is Oklahoma City's long-range plan to ensure a healthy environment, community, and economy for its residents. The decisions we make today affect the choices we will have in the future about places to live, work and play.

The City of Oklahoma City is partnering with Neighborhood Alliance to allow you to contribute to planOKC.

Join us for a dinner workshop on July 15 at 6pm. You'll hear from the Planning Department, participate in project-planning exercises and have the opportunity to help city planners understand our neighborhoods' unique personalities, their challenges and their strengths. We'd like to see a representative from every neighborhood there!

Register today for this one-of-a-kind workshop at nacok.org or call us, 528-6322.

National Night Out 2010!

Start planning now,
the date has been set:

September 14, 2010

New for this year: online registration
opens June 15, at nacok.org.

June 15 - August 3

Early registration for neighborhood events. All Neighborhoods registering by August 3 will be entered in a drawing for Target gift cards to put toward their event!

**NEW
THIS YEAR!**

August 3 NNO Kick-Off Event, and Volunteer Request Deadline

Photo with the Mayor and City Council at City Hall, NNO Proclamation, and Live Registration Drive. Get your registration in today for a chance to win Target Gift Cards for your event! Last day to submit your volunteer request (online as of June 15) to be considered for Target Volunteers for your event. The fun starts at 8 am on the west steps of City Hall.

August 4 - September 30

Final Registration for NNO events. Register your neighborhood event to be included on the Neighborhood Alliance Master List, distributed to Police, Fire, County and City agencies. A representative from Neighborhood Alliance will visit your event and present a certificate of participation!



Organizers from Chisholm Creek
with their Certificate of Participation

When "Green" Meets the Black Letter

By Matthew Winton, Attorney

Sometimes within common interest communities (condominiums, homeowner associations, etc) conflict arises over aesthetic taste, which may be somewhat subjective. What happens when differences arise between plain covenant language and efforts to "green" a community? By "green" I mean efforts to live/build more sustainably or as some put it "Use it up. Wear it out. Make it do or do without."

For example, tax rules recently changed that greatly incentivize the use of solar energy; but what if my covenants prohibit all roof installations? Another example might come from covenants that limit animals to "a reasonable number of household pets," but I would like to raise backyard bees for the rumored allergy-alleviating effects of local honey. In essence, what does an association and its members do when the covenants do not allow for the growing trend to live more sustainably?

Another aspect of green living may be to eschew the machine dryer for a clothesline. Yet, many if not a significant majority of real property covenants on file restrict clotheslines. What about edible landscaping? Perhaps such landscaping design doesn't meet the community's standard for yard maintenance. How are we to reconcile the urge to live more softly within the common interest community framework?

These are just a sample of many different possible conflicts between traditional covenant restrictions in an age when "green" is good. While some may believe the sustainability movement is simply a fad, I propose that the success of farmer's markets, the rise of organic choices in places such as Wal-Mart, and the multitude of folks who are choosing to lessen their earth impact portend a long-lasting lifestyle shift.

Of course, one choice is to simply ignore the covenants and do what one wants. As might be expected, such unilateralism comes at a peril. Recently, one Flower Mound, Texas couple did just that and installed solar panels against the restrictions in their covenants and were sued by their homeowners association (the HOA later dropped the lawsuit).

Another choice is that the community may amend its governing documents to expressly allow certain sustainable practices. But, governing document amendment projects may be difficult or impossible depending on the interest level among the owners or the percentage required for amendment. In some areas, legislation is being adopted to "trump" restrictive covenants, such as laws expressly allowing solar panels and private wind generators to be installed on lots within community associations.

Numerous examples of these types of conflicts abound on the Internet. How will your community contribute to the dialogue and reasonable resolution of the issue?

Matthew L. Winton is a founding partner of the Vaughn & Winton law firm. He primarily limits his legal practice to community association law issues. He is admitted to all Oklahoma courts and is a member of the bar in Oklahoma and Texas. This article is one in a continuing series on Oklahoma community association topics. If there is a question you would like to see covered in this column, please feel free to email your question to mlw@vwlaw.net.



Summer Hours

Neighborhood Alliance will be closed
Fridays from Memorial Day through
Labor Day. Our website is always open!

nacok.org

City Profile: Russell Claus

Director, Department of Planning

Oklahoma City's Planning Director, Russell Claus, views the planOKC effort now underway as a chance for residents to capitalize on the enormous potential he sees for his adopted city. Mr. Claus, an Australia native, moved to Oklahoma City in 1996 via Boston, upstate New York, and Tacoma Washington.

"planOKC is the City's process for development of a new comprehensive plan, which is the primary guiding document for land use and growth in the city. planOKC has a 20-year time horizon, so the opportunity for input at this scale does not come around very frequently. **In fact, this is only the fourth comprehensive plan since the City was established,**" Claus said.

"If people have issues they are concerned about, or ideas they would like to submit about how they would like Oklahoma City to grow, planOKC is the perfect opportunity to do that." Claus said he believes Oklahoma is poised for evolution into one of the nation's "go to" cities, and thinks there are tremendous advantages to be derived from the City's natural assets – relatively good weather and an abundance of water and available land. Plus, he said, many more of our brightest young talents are electing to stay in Oklahoma City due to the investments made in downtown in recent years. "This is a place where more and more people are excited to live and we want to continue that momentum."

Neighborhoods in particular have a great stake in planOKC, Claus said, urging people in the coming months to take advantage of the chance to make their feelings known about what they want their neighborhoods to be, and to suggest how the City can support their goals, whether this be better accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, or access to retail and other amenities.

As Planning Director, Claus said his goal with planOKC is to develop a clear, strategic 20-year framework for Oklahoma City to further capitalize on its assets. "People should elevate their expectations about what we can be. This is important for us and future generations," Claus said.



Russell Claus

He compared OKC to Dubai in the Middle East and Las Vegas, Nevada, which have emerged as great cities despite harsh climates and scarcity of water. "We have water, trees and a great infrastructure; there are very few barriers to entry, and really, I think the weather is pretty good," Claus is optimistic about the chance planOKC offers to shape the city with citizen input, and urged people to participate and to stay informed about issues being decided at city hall.

"We want to stress that this is a very democratic process – that people are heard, so it is important that they get engaged," he said. "A lot of planning has to go on to determine the structure of a community, and planOKC is one of the most important ways for those interested in the city to play a part in shaping our community."

Claus managed the OKC Urban Redevelopment Division, the Community Appearance Division and the Murrah District Revitalization Program before being named Planning Director. He oversees community development efforts, including housing and homeless initiatives; urban redevelopment, and general city planning, including the comprehensive plan, urban design and code.

Claus makes his own home in the historic Linwood Place neighborhood (NW 23/NW 16/Drexel/I-44). He and his partner, Lisa, have two girls, Ella, 7, and Matariki, 6. Claus also has two older children, Kendall, 20, and Lachlan, 18.

Claus holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia, and in 1994 received a Master's in City Planning from MIT.

Information about planOKC can be found at www.okc.gov/planokc and the OKC Planning Department can be reached at 297-2576.

Neighborhood Alliance thanks Russell Claus for his work in planning Oklahoma City's development and in leading its 20-year planning effort, planOKC.

It has been over 30 years since OKC's current long-range plan was written, and 10 years since it was last updated. The City has experienced a lot of changes since then, including increased social diversity, new health challenges, and the expansion of our city. It is time for a new plan that will address those changes.

planOKC is our new plan to ensure a healthy environment, community, and economy for its residents. It looks ahead to our future and answers some important questions, including: What can we do to ensure our current population and future generations can continue to enjoy increasing quality of life? And, what choices will they have about where they live, work and play? The answers depend on the decisions we make today.

planOKC contains eight primary elements: **sustainOKC** guides how we develop land in OKC; **connectOKC** focuses on our transportation choices; **greenOKC** focuses on our environment and natural resources; **liveOKC** focuses on communities and issues important to neighborhoods; **enrichOKC** focuses on our cultural history and how our city looks; **playOKC** focuses on our parks and recreation system; **strengthenOKC** focuses on jobs and our local economy; **serveOKC** focuses on our city services like fire, police, water, sewer and waste.

Feedback from neighborhoods about these eight elements will help create an informed plan that guides decisions about how Oklahoma City will develop, and how we can make our city a healthier place. It is crucial that neighborhoods participate in **planOKC** because even though each neighborhood is unique, they face similar challenges.

planOKC is coordinating with Neighborhood Alliance to host a special dinner workshop for neighborhood associations at 6pm on July 15, 2010 at Langston University's Lincoln Blvd. Campus. We will share more information about the planning process, and ask you about your neighborhood challenges as well as strengths. Then, beginning in the fall we will provide materials to any neighborhood association that wants to do an activity to help find solutions to our challenges, and ways to build on our strengths. We'd love to see a representative from each neighborhood attend.

To reserve a seat for the **planOKC** dinner workshop register online at nacok.org or call Neighborhood Alliance at 528-6322. To find out more about planOKC visit www.okc.gov/planOKC or call 297-2283.

planokc

News from the Neighborhoods

Windsor Hills NA (NW 36/NW 26/Meridian/Ann Arbor) has added 12 new Patrol teams to the neighborhood patrol for a total of 36 teams!

Miller NA (NW 16/NW 10/Villa/May) Miller Youth are creating a community garden on a plot of land volunteered by a neighborhood resident.

Prairie Queen NA (SW 60/SW 72/Blackwelder/Penn) had Inspector Kevin Johnson of the OCPD's Graffiti Task Force speak to their neighborhood association about the efforts to control criminal graffiti activity. They also hosted a block captains appreciation dinner to thank their block captains for all the work that they do for the neighborhood.

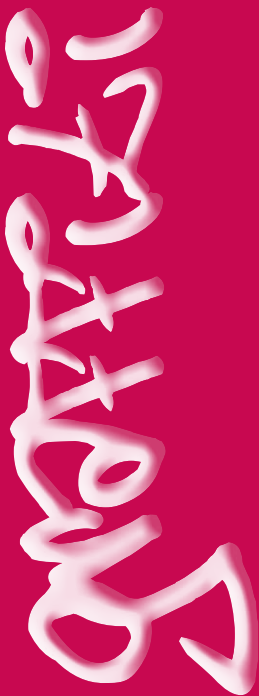
Fairdale, Belle Isle, Riviera NA (NW 62nd/NW 55th/N Villa/N Ross) has set up a neighborhood volunteer schedule to keep Ross Park litter-free.

Lansbrook HOA (Britton/NW 85/MacArthur/N Rockwell) is hosting a garage sale to raise funds to create a Veterans' Memorial in their neighborhood.

Willow Creek Estates (NW122/NW114/Council Rd/Sylvester/Willow Way) is having a parade and carnival in honor of Flag Day, June 12th.



REMEMBER: Submit your neighborhood news to deborah@nacok.org or mail your newsletter to us. We want to know what's going on in your neighborhood.



Confused about what to do when you see Graffiti?

Oklahoma City Police are cracking down on offenders but what can you do when you see it in your neighborhood? Our best defense is quick action:

If you see graffiti in progress call 911

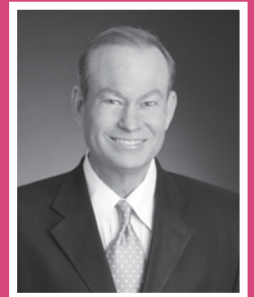
Otherwise call the City's ActionLine at 297-2535

Don't forget, Chesapeake Employees are available all summer long to help with your neighborhood projects!

Contact Katie.Collins@chk.com

Mayor Re-elected

Mick Cornett was sworn in on April 13 for his third term as Mayor after winning re-election in March. He is just the fourth mayor in City history to be elected to a third term. We congratulate Mayor Cornett and look forward to another four years of his visionary leadership.



Neighborhood Alliance is pleased to consider itself a friend of the Mayor's Office. When asked about how the Mayor sees neighborhoods contributing to the future of OKC, he remarked, "We are fortunate in Oklahoma City to have a solid foundation of quality neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are the very fabric of our society - they encourage vibrant urban living and unique retail offerings and provide our residents with diverse options for living, shopping and recreating." He went on further to add, "Our community continues to prove itself a model for the kind of empowered neighborhoods many states across the nation strive to create."

We certainly couldn't agree more! Congratulations, Mayor Cornett. We look forward to another four years of your leadership of this great City!

Ready to Make a Difference!

Congratulating the *Neighborhood Leaders for Today Class of 2010*



NLT 2010 Class visiting
Pelco Products, makers of ornamental lights

Amy Edison, Ross Heights Neighborhood
Debi Franklin, Fenwick Neighborhood
Patsy Franks, Lakeridge Run Neighborhood
Twyla Gable, Lyons Park Neighborhood
Brenda Granger, Treadwell Hills Neighborhood
Edward Granger, Treadwell Hills Neighborhood
Joe Hausknecht, Fenwick Garden Village
Tommy Hay, Riverpark Neighborhood
Janet Herron, The Ridge at Shadow Lake
Eric Hilburn, Edgewater-Lakepointe Neighborhood
Diane Kaczmarcik, Cascade Estates HOA
Lucas Malicoate, Timber Creek Estates
Danny Marroquin, Neighborhood Alliance Intern
Charles Ming, Cheyenne Ridge
Daniel Orza, Briarcreek Neighborhood Association

Alice Parker, Zachary Taylor Neighborhood Association

David Puente, Friends of Tenth Street

Cresha Redus, John F. Kennedy Neighborhood

Sharon Scott, Brookwood

Linda Tillman, NE Oklahoma City

Jonathan Wester, Las Vegas Neighborhood

Jim Witcher, Harvest Hills

Joey Allen, Friends of Tenth Street

Trisha Baldwin, Roberts Crest Neighborhood Association

Madeline Benham, Las Vegas Neighborhood

Dena Bleeker, Redbud Canyon

Susan Brown, Briarcreek Neighborhood Association

Jeanna Daniel, Riverpark Neighborhood

We congratulate the 2010 Class of NLT! This one-of-a-kind leadership program is designed to give citizens the confidence and tools they need to create, promote and sustain productive citizen-based neighborhood associations and to help develop sustainable community improvement projects. The class runs seven weeks and includes over 30 different speakers all geared toward creating educated, well-equipped neighborhood leaders throughout Oklahoma City. This class included 35 hours of classroom study through which participants learned how to organize successful neighborhood groups, access City services, develop successful grant projects, organize neighborhood specific programs, navigate City Hall, establish membership drives, communicate effectively, and much more. If you are interested in signing up for this class, make sure you are on our email list. Applications are accepted each year in January and early February.

Neighborhood Alliance and Home Depot have teamed up to support Riverpark Neighborhood's *Catholic Heart Camp* work week.

Home Depot awarded us \$2500 in gift cards which we are giving to Riverpark to purchase much needed supplies for the rehabbing of homes in the neighborhood.

Thank you to Home Depot, Riverpark Neighborhood Association and Catholic Heart Camp for helping us make a difference in so many people's lives.



*Riverpark is still
in need of paint.
You can donate any
color to the project
by emailing
Jeanna Daniel at
leejeantay@sbcglobal.net*

How Can Your Neighborhood Use Crime Statistics?

One of the helpful crime prevention tools available to organized neighborhood and homeowner associations registered with Neighborhood Alliance is the monthly "Crime Stats" report from Neighborhood Alliance. The data is collected, reported and formulated by the Oklahoma City Police Department and Neighborhood Alliance distributes the information to neighborhood leaders. The reports are uploaded to our website (nacok.org) on a weekly basis, and a hard copy is mailed to each registered neighborhood on a monthly basis.

Under the current system, the OCPD collects crime data based on their reporting districts. These reporting districts are one-square mile and most times they do not specifically follow a neighborhood's boundaries. Therefore a neighborhood's crime stats will most likely include data on crimes that happened near, but outside your neighborhood's boundaries. This can be a good thing! Remember, what happens AROUND your neighborhood is just as important as what has happens INSIDE your neighborhood.

Neighborhood Alliance encourages you to print these crime stats in your newsletter, put them on your website or talk about them at your meetings. Most neighborhoods print only the crime that occurred within their boundaries and keep the rest as reference only. If, after reviewing your crime stats, you spot crime trends or trouble spots in the neighborhood you may want to visit your local Police Community Relations (PCR) Officer to discuss possible solutions.

Remember, information and communication are vital to a safe neighborhood. Utilize the crime stats to help with that common goal.



HOW A CRIME BECOMES A CRIME STATISTIC

Crimes reported by the public don't always appear in the police department's weekly crime reports the same week they're reported. A reported crime becomes a statistic only after being recorded, approved and entered by data entry in the Oklahoma City Police Department's Records Bureau. The process can take up to a week or more. Cases in which an arrest is made are entered first. Once entered as approved, reports are released to the public and sent to Neighborhood Alliance for distribution.

But the first step, the call to 911, is in your hands - make that call!

Get up to \$10,000 for your neighborhood!

Could your neighborhood use \$10,000 to do an improvement or safety project?

If you are in a low to moderate income area then you can apply for the funds through the City of Oklahoma City's Stronger Neighborhood Initiative grant. Now is the time to start thinking about your possible projects...

- Ornamental Lights
- Improve the public areas of your local school grounds
- Volunteer crime patrol programs
- Community gardens
- Entryway/gateway signage
- Public park improvements
- Benches or other improvements to the city's walking trails or medians
- Sustainability projects for your neighborhood
- And much, much more!



To apply, representatives from your neighborhood must attend one of two informational meetings being offered at Neighborhood Alliance. Call us at 528-6322 to reserve your seat.

Wednesday, July 7, 4pm-6pm - or - Thursday, July 8, 6pm-8pm

Letter of Intent is due to the City of OKC by Tuesday, August 17, 2010

Grants are due on Tuesday, October 12, 2010

Neighborhood Alliance Honored with ONE Award



Neighborhood Alliance was honored by the **Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits** as one of three statewide finalists in the Community Category of the Oklahoma Nonprofit Excellence (ONE) Awards.

Georgie Rasco (shown right) accepted the **Devon Energy Corporation Award** for Community Excellence from Larry Nichols, CEO of Devon Energy, this April in Tulsa. The award includes a \$5000 monetary gift which Neighborhood Alliance will be using to fund neighborhood workshops in the coming year.

Thank you Devon Energy and Center for Nonprofits!

Thank You Good Neighbors!

We would like to thank all of you who have sent in your personal, business and neighborhood contributions in response to our fundraising letter sent out in March. This is our only direct-mail fundraising appeal of the year.

Your support is critical to our success and our ability to provide assistance to nearly 400 registered neighborhoods throughout Central Oklahoma. Donations allow us to continue to offer FREE workshops and roundtables throughout the year. We appreciate having all of you as partners in helping to make central Oklahoma safe, attractive and healthy for all of us.

Not yet contributed? You can do so now. Contributions can be sent to:

Neighborhood Alliance, Inc. 1236 NW 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK, 73118, or you can donate online at www.nacok.org.

Spring and summer workshops at Neighborhood Alliance

Code Enforcement 101

Tuesday, June 22 at 6:30pm
MetroTech's Big Dipper Room

Our most eagerly awaited workshop of the year! This workshop focuses on the City of OKC code enforcement programs, the impact of zoning on code enforcement and some of the resources available to residents for taking care of their homes and neighborhoods. You will learn how to proactively work with City officials to deal with code violations and help clean up your neighborhood. After a general presentation, you will have the opportunity to sit with City department representatives and discuss specific issues! Don't miss this great opportunity to get the inside track on Code Enforcement in OKC! Register online at nacok.org.



Metro Technology Centers
Preparing for Life

Thank you to MetroTech for
sponsoring this workshop!

Basic Legal Issues for HOAs

Covenants, bylaws and liens, oh my!

Matthew Winton is Oklahoma's pre-eminent attorney for HOA law and a super presenter! He will introduce the basics of HOA law including covenants, bylaws and amendment procedures. The workshop finishes up with a generous Question & Answer session. Offered twice this year:

June 13, 6:30pm Basic Legal Issues for HOAs (South)

Home Creations' Melody Hall in Moore.

Register online at nacok.org.

July 15, 6:30pm Basic Legal Issues for HOAs (North)

Pelco Products in Edmond.

Register online at nacok.org.



Thank you to Home Creations and Pelco Products for supporting these workshops!

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Wnacok.org
today!

The Neighborhood Alliance
is located at
1236 NW 36th Street
(the southeast corner of
NW 36th and Classen).



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Oklahoma City, OK 73118

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, June 15 at 6:30pm - Basic Legal Issues for HOAs (South)
Home Creations' Melody Hall in Moore. See page 7 for details.
Register online at nacok.org

Tuesday, June 22 at 6:30pm - Code Enforcement 101
MetroTech's Big Dipper Room. See page 7 for details.
Register online at nacok.org

Tuesday, July 6 at 6pm - New Officer Training
Open to anyone who wants to learn more about being a neighborhood officer. Light dinner served.
Neighborhood Alliance Building, 1236 NW 36th Street, OKC.
Reserve your seat at 528-6322 or register online: nacok.org

Tuesday, July 13 at 6:30pm - Basic Legal Issues for HOAs (North)
Pelco Products in Edmond. See page 7 for details.
Register online at nacok.org

Thursday, July 15 at 6:30pm - planOKC Neighborhood Workshop
Langston University OKC. See pages 1 and 3 for details.
Register online at nacok.org

Tuesday, August 10 at 6pm - Organizing Your Neighborhood
This beginners' workshop gives you the tools you need to get your neighborhood organized. Light dinner served.
Neighborhood Alliance Building, 1236 NW 36th Street, OKC.
Call to reserve your seat, 528-6322.